

CLAIMS

What we claim is:

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1. A method of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the method comprising the steps of:

10 i. storing data that is intended for transmission to the data-handling device according to a predetermined template which provides a plurality of fields, each of the fields being capable of containing a portion of the data;

ii. providing mappings that map the data within the fields of the predetermined template to fields within alternative templates should it be determined that the data-handling device is not capable of handling data held in the predetermined template; and

15 iii. transmitting the data to the data-handling device.

2. A method according to claim 1 in which the method provides a plurality of predetermined templates in any one of which data may be stored.

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3. A method according to claim 2 in which the method provides a plurality of alternative templates such that data provided in any of the predetermined templates can be mapped to at least one of the alternative templates.

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4. A method according to claim 3 which comprises specifying a plurality of mappings from the predetermined to the alternative templates.

30 5. A method according to claim 4 which ensures that at least one mapping allows data to be mapped to an alternative template such that the data can be handled by substantially all data-handling devices that may be sent data.

6. A method according to claim 4 in which at least a preferred and an alternative mapping are defined.

5 7. A method according to claim 1 which comprises determining whether the data-handling device is capable of handling data before transmission to the data-handling device and mapping the data using the mappings should it be determined that the data-handling device cannot handle the predetermined template.

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8. A method according to claim 1 in which the method is arranged to determine whether the data-handling device is capable of handling the data after it has been transmitted to the data-handling device.

15 9. A computing device capable of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the computing device comprising a receiving means for receiving a request for data, a transmitting means arranged to transmit data, a processing means arranged to process data and a storage means for storing data, the receiving means is arranged to communicate the receipt of
20 a request for data to the processing means which is arranged, upon the receipt of such a communication, to retrieve data from the storage means which has been stored according to a predetermined template which provides a plurality of fields such that each of the fields is capable of containing a portion of the data, the storage means also being arranged to
25 store mappings which are arranged to map data held in fields of the predetermined template to fields within alternative templates, the processing means being capable of mapping data stored in the predetermined template to alternative templates according to the mappings and sending the mapped data to the transmitting means for transmission.

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10. A network capable of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the network comprising a receiving means for receiving a request

for data, a transmitting means arranged to transmit data, a processing means arranged to process data and a storage means for storing data, the receiving means is arranged to communicate the receipt of a request for data to the processing means which is arranged, upon the receipt of such a communication, to retrieve data from the storage means which has been stored according to a predetermined template which provides a plurality of fields such that each of the fields is capable of containing a portion of the data, the storage means also being arranged to store mappings which are arranged to map data held in fields of the predetermined template to fields within alternative templates, the processing means being capable of mapping data stored in the predetermined template to alternative templates according to the mappings and sending the mapped data to the transmitting means for transmission.

11. A data-handling device capable of communicating with a computing device and/or network and receiving data therefrom, the data-handling device being arranged to communicate a parameter such that the method of claim 1 can be applied to the data that is sent to the data-handling device.

12. A machine-readable medium containing instructions which when read by a computing device cause that computing device substantially to perform the method of claims 1.

13. A machine-readable medium containing instructions which when read by a computing device cause that computing device to function substantially as the computing device of claim 9.

14. A machine-readable medium containing instructions which when read by a computing device of a network cause that network to function substantially as the network of claim 10.

15. A machine-readable medium containing instruction which when read

by a data-handling device cause that data-handling device to function substantially as the data-handling device as the data handling device of claim 11.

5 16. A method of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the method comprising the steps of:

i. storing data that is intended for transmission to the data-handling device in one of a plurality of predetermined templates each of which provides a plurality of fields and each of the fields being capable of
10 containing a portion of the data;

ii. providing a plurality of mappings that map data held within a field of one of the predetermined templates to fields within an alternative template should it be determined that the data-handling device to which the data is to be sent is not capable of handling data held in the predetermined
15 template;

iii. altering the data according to one of the mappings should it be determined that the data-handling device cannot handle the data; and

iv. transmitting the data to the data-handling device.

20 17. A method according to claim 16 which allows the mappings to be ranked such that at least one of the mappings is performed in preference to at least one of the other mappings.

25 18. A method of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the method comprising the steps of:

i. storing data that is intended for transmission to the data-handling device in one of a plurality of predetermined templates each of which provides a plurality of fields and each of the fields being capable of containing a portion of the data;

30 ii. providing a plurality of mappings that map data held within a field of one of the predetermined templates to fields within an alternative template should it be determined that the data-handling device to which the

data is to be sent is not capable of handling data held in the predetermined template, the predetermined mappings including at least a preferred mapping which is performed in preference to other mappings should it be determined that a mapping is required and a default mapping that is performed if other mappings do not map the data such that it can be handled by the data-handling device;

iii. altering the data according to one of the mappings should it be determined that the data-handling device cannot handle the data; and

iv. transmitting the data to the data-handling device.

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19. A computing device capable of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the computing device comprising a receiver, a transmitter, a processor and a memory, the receiver is arranged to communicate the receipt of a request for data to the processor which is arranged, upon the receipt of such a request, to retrieve data from the memory which has been stored in the memory in one of a plurality of predetermined templates each of which provides a plurality of fields such that each of the fields is capable of containing a portion of the data, the memory also being arranged to store mappings which are arranged to map data held in fields of the predetermined template to fields within alternative templates, the processor being capable of mapping data stored in the predetermined template to alternative templates according to the mappings and sending the mapped data to the transmitter for transmission.

20. A network capable of delivering data to at least one data-handling device, the network comprising a receiver, a transmitter, a processor and a memory, the receiver is arranged to communicate the receipt of a request for data to the processor which is arranged, upon the receipt of such a request, to retrieve data from the memory which has been stored according to one of a plurality of predetermined templates each of which provides a plurality of fields such that each of the fields is capable of containing a portion of the data, the memory also being arranged to store mappings

which are arranged to map data held in fields of the predetermined template to fields within alternative templates, the processor being capable of mapping data stored in the predetermined template to alternative templates according to the mappings and sending the mapped data to the transmitter
5 for transmission.

21. A method of sending data to at least one remote device, the method comprising the steps of:

i. storing data that it is intended to send to the remote device in one
10 of a plurality of predetermined templates each of which provides a plurality of fields and each of the fields allowing a portion of the data to be stored therein;

ii. providing a plurality of transformations that transform data held within one of the plurality of templates such that the data then corresponds
15 to an alternative template such that data held in a field of one of the predetermined templates is moved to a field within the alternative template;

iii. transforming the data according to one of the transformations should it be determined that the remote device cannot handle the data as it is stored in the predetermined template;

20 iv. and sending the data to the remote device.

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